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ABSTRACT

Research has identified several aspects of effective teacher behavior, as measured by student performance. Three aspects of effective teacher behavior are in the areas of instruction, management, and acceptance. Instructionally, teachers should try to provide more variety to deal with different learning styles; they should ask purposeful questions of all students, and they should be aware of the goal structure of their classes. With regard to classroom management, teachers should be more aware of their nonverbal behavior which fosters students' on task behavior, e.g., moving around the class and checking with students while they are doing seatwork. Teachers should also provide clear transitions from one subject to another, structuring comments that tie instruction to a meaningful whole, and a fair set of rules applied equitably to all. Equally important for all students is a feeling of acceptance--a feeling of self worth. This can be achieved through feedback on the teacher's part. Feedback can be positive or negative, but it is necessary for providing direction for academic performance and helping to maintain on task behavior. (JM)

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EFFECTIVE TEACHER BEHAVIORS

by
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EFFECTIVE TEACHER BEHAVIORS

What a teacher does makes a difference!

To classroom teachers, this seems all too obvious and certainly common sense, yet, demonstration of successful instruction fails to be common practice.

Like overlearning, effective teaching styles need to be automatic, consistent and natural. Also, like overlearning, internalizing successful instruction patterns comes with practice. Practice of modeling motivating interactions, practice of direct instruction techniques, practice of equitable behavior management strategies.

Educators are rightly accountable for student learning. However, preoccupation with activities to manage instructional materials may divert energy necessary to manage human resources. Both are important and definitely a balance needs to be achieved for without a realistic self image, precious few cognitive gains will remain. Interactive patterns are critical to social and academic success (Kerman, 1976; Johnson and Johnson, 1980). Indeed it is Pygmalion revisited. The self-fulfilling prophecy reinforces the impact of perceptions on the interchange we call teaching. These perceptions, accurate or not, influence the quality and quantity of interactions in the learning environment.

Teacher expectations are founded in perceptions, often initial appearances. And those first impressions are resistant to change even in the face of contradictory information (Watson and Johnson, 1972).

The goal is to counter the impact of restrictive perceptions through a conscious effort to interact positively and equitably with all persons. Specific teaching behaviors supportive of student achievement are then practiced to the benefit of student and teacher.

Effective Teacher Behaviors

Supportive teacher patterns are interrelated and do not function in isolation. In fact, clusters of behaviors more accurately describe the interdependence of styles -- teacher and learner (MacDonald and Tanabe, 1973). The interface of these behaviors will be briefly discussed in the categories: instruction, management and acceptance as related to classroom interactions. Such a classification subsums other executive functions for brevity.

Instruction

The classroom teacher is a broker of knowledge, not the source of all information, but necessarily a manipulator of instruction. Manipulation in the finest sense of the word means direct teacher involvement in the delivery of instruction. Students who received direct instruction from the teacher as compared with individualized or discovery learning approaches evidenced greater gains (Brophy, 1979). Direct instruction in how to study enabled students to become more independent learners. Students do not automatically acquire learning skills through subject matter. Therefore, learning skills should be taught directly (Larkin and Reif, 1974). Skills on how and what to study are demonstrated through the teacher's emphasis on learning and achievement. Indicating "you get what you teach for," Chall and Feldman (1966) noted a business like orientation correlated with student gains. Task oriented teacher behaviors and direct instruction address a learning style that prefers the teacher to have subject matter expertise. Instruction that models structure, closure and the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency integrates sound teaching principles with options to accommodate learning styles.

Effective Teacher Behaviors

Appropriate here is a note regarding teacher style. Most educators teach as they learned best. Modifying those behaviors to accommodate the preferences of others involves the effective teaching strategy, flexibility (Larrivee, 1980). Flexibility defined in terms of teacher skills in adapting instructional materials and techniques is critical to the success of all students (Johnson and Brooks, 1979). The quality, teacher flexibility, is evidenced in the variety of teaching patterns employed and the appropriateness of their timing (Graham and Heimere, 1981).

Variety in teacher initiated learning activities provide options for visual, auditory and tactile learning modes. Informal techniques provide a basis for learning preferences. Formalized inventories such as the Hill Model indicate style in 28 categories. Alternative teaching methods can be designed whether teachers have data from formal learning inventories or simply read the cues from their students. Regardless of the source of the preference for making meaning, the options provided to enable the learner to demonstrate their best way to learn must be valued. Never let the alternative be viewed as a lesser standard or of reduced quality. The expectation remains fixed, the avenues to arrive at the goal are flexible, yet valid.

Knowledge of learning styles can be integrated in the instructional patterns. The art of questioning is a prime example. Since a major portion of teaching involves questions, making it vital that this method of instruction be valuable. Researchers have identified several aspects of inquiry supportive of student achievement.

The frequency of academically focused questions, the amount of time spent in question-answer format, and the use of multilevel questions were strategies

reported in correlation and experimental studies (Clark, 1979). A high proportion of "right" answers, 75-80% accuracy for low-order questions, is usually the criteria for successful instruction. Success and feedback certainly are interrelated in this achievement. Yet, concern is raised for the level of thinking required to respond as well as who is answering. Providing all students the opportunity to think or to have an opinion is important. False ceilings tend to be placed on persons perceived as less able. They get "easy" questions. Student success in answering higher level questions can be enhanced if teachers utilize the related behaviors of probing and latency, as well as feedback and style preference.

It is important to keep in mind access to instructional opportunity. If perceptions of ability reduce the quantityand quality of interactions, students can be selectively denied opportunities to learn. Providing purposeful opportunities to all students is most challenging to teachers.

A conscientious effort to ask different types of questions that require students to think is the first hurdle along the track. The second hurdle is to wait. Observations show that generally, educators wait 1-1/2 seconds for answers to questions. If the answer isn't immediately forthcoming, the question is given to another. If teachers relax and wait 5 seconds, the probability of an answer increases. That probability of response is further increased with a wait of 10 or 15 seconds. If the question required thinking, the time lapse is necessary. Furthermore, if the question was worth asking, it deserves an answer and waiting is the means to get that reply. Anderson and Faust (1973) contend that a question has no instructional effect unless students actually make a response. A factor in obtaining a response is teacher body language during the waiting period. A relaxed posture, supportive gesture and silence indicates the thinking process is valued.

Effective Teacher Behaviors

O.K. After waiting, then what? Given the latency period, restate the question, provide a clue or gesture to an object that would assist. This technique, probing, allows that our questioning skills aren't perfect. It also allows the educator to rephrase the question using a pattern that calls for contrasting factors, identifying similarities or classification on lists. These options may more adequately address learner preference. The teaching style that allows silence after the question (Rowe, 1974) and provides additional information after a pause support achievement (Andre, 1979). The competitive format, identified by speed of response, does little to build thinking skills and is harmful to pupils with specific impairment (Sapon-Shevin, 1978). The aspect of probing that extends student response and utilizes student ideas provides student ownership of the learning and achievement. Ownership of one's success helps to build an internal locus of control. Evidence supports the positive relationship of internality to success in school (Vasquez, 1974). Factors of internality have specific implications for effective instructional patterns. Simple interaction patterns that are easily incorporated in teaching reinforce cause and effect relationships. Recognizing causality provides a framework to identify where control over one's situation can be gained. In addition, learning experiences that structure cooperative efforts, like peer tutoring, enable attribution of success to be related to individual effort, not chance. Externality associates achievement to chance rather than personal ability. When teachers use questions that predict outcomes, strategies that denote causality, and short stories utilizing examples of effort and ability, students more readily equate success to skill. The relevance of curriculum and learning activities holds particular impact for externals as they ask fewer questions and seek less information making their base for decisions limited. Thus the quality of the information being processed is critical.

Effective Teacher Behaviors

Successful instruction to address locus of control emphasizes access to relevant, structured learning opportunities. These opportunities are controlled by the teacher (Lefcourt, 1968) and need to reflect those practices that are most effective. One such practice involves classroom organizational patterns.

Examination of one's classroom goal structure deserves attention. Traditionally, competition has been the dominate goal format in classrooms. Dissatisfaction with the competitive classroom system has been prevalent. Competition definitely limits who can succeed. Given the span of cultural and academic diversity in today's classrooms, alternative measures should be considered. A balance with individual and cooperative formats is necessary if access to educational opportunity is to be achieved. Instruction recognizing individual need does not necessarily imply one-on-one teaching nor solely student-machine interaction. Individualizing does consider student learning preferences, previous learning and the learning objective. Individualized instruction means organization and planning as well as managerial skill. Personalized instruction can be accomplished in a group setting when mastery of objectives are evaluated individually. Avenues to evidence mastery in a variety of modes are vital to individualized instruction as are sequenced and paced learning activities. Learning centers can effectively support the individual goal format if activities are planned to address different learning styles.

The interdependent, cooperative format has been the least evident in classrooms even though research has shown it effective in both cognitive and affective domains (Johnson and Johnson, 1981). However, it is not enough to say "cooperate". Effective cooperative activities must be "engineered" (Slavin, 1981) and to achieve instructional goals, teachers become managers of resources:

human, time and material. Structured team learning has specific guidelines to maximize the learning potential of shared responsibility (Slavin, 1980a; Aronson, 1978; Sharan and Sharan, 1976). Students with external locus of control respond positively to associative or teaming learning activities. The instructional technique of checking for understanding is facilitated by small group review sessions. Peer tutoring, a form of cooperative learning, has often been cited as an effective strategy.

A balance of the goal formats is recommended. Since cooperative structures compose a minor role in classrooms, increased use of group investigation techniques is encouraged.

Management

Effective instructional behaviors model an academically oriented classroom. These businesslike patterns are supported by the organizational style of the teacher. Managing a classroom is a complex task, deserving the status of an executive function.

To gain a feel for an effectively functioning learning environment, let's look at a well-organized classroom. In it are distinct areas furnished and equipped for specific activities; identified traffic patterns to facilitate transition in activities and movement, and students appear to know what is expected of them (Arlin, 1979). Attention is given the presentation and seatwork is supervised. Teachers who monitor seatwork increase focused learning time by clarifying directions and reinforcing expectations. Soar (1972) noted classrooms in which independent seatwork was not monitored had only 8% of the students on task, whereas 80% were involved in monitored, small group work. Supervising seatwork enchances the access to learning. Interactions, verbal or nonverbal, related to monitoring reinforce on-task behavior.

Effective Teacher Behaviors

Nonverbal behaviors are woven in most interactions. Facial cues, gestures, and eye contact are closely scrutinized by students. If verbal and nonverbal patterns are not congruent, the nonverbal behavior is read as more valid. Our credibility as educators rides on what we are -- not what we say, thus emphasizing that we model the behavior desired. In so doing, we evidence that learning is important. Behaviors supported by extensive planning, monitoring the learning process, and facilitating transitions speak loudly of our commitment to quality instruction.

Moving about the classroom removes the barrier of "territory" that tends to isolate learners. Students are not invisible, nor are there shields to keep you from relating. Teacher availability to maintain intellectual orientation demonstrates that learning is important.

Proximity, coupled with specific patterns regarding the change in learning activities, reduces downtime. Maintenance of on-task behavior is enhanced by teacher behaviors that clarify directions and minimize distractions to the focused learning time. Procedures to end one activity and being another, to facilitate movement within the room and to culminate an activity relate to the management of transitions. Pacing instruction by student need is an effective management skill (Berliner and Rosenshine, 1976). Kounin (1970) identified teacher behaviors that opposed smooth transitions to be "dangles", "thrusts" and "flip-flops". These terms referred to ineffective verbal exchanges, such as returning to an activity after another had been initiated, signaling the start of an activity then virtually losing it in midair, thus leaving students without definite focus. Poor transitions are also related to repeated interruptions in the learning time. Fragmented instruction is frustrating to learners, especially for the learner desiring order and sequence.

Effective Teacher Behaviors

Students with a preference for timelines as well as the learner with an external locus of control need management to structure their learning. This attention too reinforces the skill and ability base.

A cluster of management behaviors that support efficient transitions and student learning are labeled structuring comments. Structuring refers to the general planning and organization of the classroom as well as specific signals that inform students of important content.

Effective teachers provide "intellectual scaffolding" to tie instruction to a meaningful whole (Tikunoff, 1975). One effective technique is the review of previously learned material with the possibility of reteaching concepts prior to initiating new material. Structuring comments by the teacher to indicate what has been learned, what is about to be learned, and how it applies to future learnings support student achievement (Belgard, 1971).

The overview at the beginning of the lesson provides a mental set for the subject matter presentation. Effective teachers communicate their expectations clearly, monitor learning activities to insure compliance and maintain student responsibility for learning (Sanford and Evertson, 1981). These behaviors incorporate structuring patterns that enable students to succeed.

Verbal signals are reinforced by outlines of major points on the chalk board or study sheets, by time allocation to adequately practice new learning and by coherence and organization of lessons (Belgard, et al., 1971). Structuring comments include clues as "this is important to remember. . ." "Remember the four stages. . ." "You better know. . ." Teacher comments prior to asking a question was a structuring pattern that was particularly effective (Wright and Nuthall, 1970). Statements following a lesson or episode effectively

support achievement, particularly if used to clarify understanding and provide closure. Structuring comments that direct application of previously mastered material build transfer skills. The importance of structure is evidenced in the time provided for practice of independent thinking skills. Teacher-student interaction during practice periods can evaluate the level of comprehension acquired.

Brophy (1982) notes that the key to effective classroom management is prevention. Extensive organization and structuring skills minimize problems. A relevant, sequenced curriculum with well-prepared activities maintain student attention. However, the perfect classroom doesn't exist; misbehavior occurs. Therefore, whatever a teacher does to stop inappropriate behavior needs to be consistent, nonemotional, and equitable. Rules are enforced for everyone. No group is exempt. A calm, matter-of-fact manner is most effective. Care must be taken not to imply that misconduct was expected of a segment of the class or an individual. A reminder: hostile or threatening desists are not effective in controlling behavior. Sarcasm or belittling remarks negatively impact on learning and have a ripple effect. Classrooms in which extreme criticism was present had lower academic gains in more subject areas (Rosenshine, 1971). Failure on the part of the individual to correct behavior requires a prompt previously agreed upon penalty. Negotiation is not available at this point. Consequences of misbehavior need to be up front just as the rule of proper conduct.

Group management techniques reflect an integrated approach to the total learning environment. Characteristics of effective schools note a positive climate for learning. In this setting, students and teachers feel good about

themselves. Quality instruction is valued and high expectations are maintained through instruction and management. However, these two factors are not devoid of the human element.

Acceptance

The worth of the individual is evident in schools that impact on learning and achievement. Teacher behaviors that demonstrate acceptance and personal regard build the self-esteem of students. A student's self-esteem is enhanced when significant others evidence they care. Studies have identified school personnel (teacher, coach, counselor) most frequently rated as "someone who cared." Modeling "I believe you are able" and "I care enough to help you" require supportive interaction patterns associated with feedback and encouragement.

Feedback is not merely correcting errors. Supportive interactions responsive to the individual must proceed the strictly cognitive feedback. Again, perceptions play a critical role. Teachers who perceive students as less able respond to them less frequently and with fewer motivating statements. It is worth noting that teacher perceptions are often the result of feedback from students. Student feedback influences teacher behaviors (Klein, 1971) which in turn impacts on interactions with students. Teachers "read" eye contact, smiles and note taking as indicators of student ability (Goodman and Miller, 1980). Failure to observe these clues may inaccurately label students and result in limited feedback. Learning style or cultural patterns are factors which determine observable feedback. Since perceptions influence interactions, judgments should be based on more data than overt classroom behaviors. Have you considered that the auditory learner may not need to take notes; or, that the student who prefers to see the whole rather than each separate part may

not show his/her calculations, as in math? Does that infer these learners don't comprehend? The human tendency to use feedback cues must be guided to recognize the impact of these perceptions on quality and quantity of interaction. The critical factor, access to learning opportunities, is the focal point.

Just as teacher perceptions are modified, students "read" value as they perceive their ability, worth and teacher's attitude toward them (Davidson and Lang, 1969) from classroom patterns. In turn, their achievement is influenced, positively or negatively as a result of these perceptions. Superior teachers are responsive to student feelings and ideas (Flanders, 1970) and utilize a student-oriented focus to reduce teacher talk. These teachers viewed learning devoid of feelings as unrealistic. Researchers Weinstein and Funtini (1970) stated that unless cognitive learning is related to the affective state in the learner, the likelihood that behavior will be influenced is limited. Attention to the emotional well-being enhances the self-concept, making learning more efficient and effective. Purposeful feedback builds the trust relationship undergirding successful instruction.

Specifically, feedback provides direction for academic performance, the next step, which enables the individual to proceed. Process feedback reinforces the steps of problem solving, sequence or method. Such statements emphasize how to get the correct answer (Anderson, 1978) which with overlearning, can be duplicated in future situations. Prompt and frequent feedback enabled students to maintain on-task behavior and to pace learning for maximum achievement (Tikunoff, 1975).

Effective Teacher Behaviors

More than just knowing one's performance is right or wrong, humans want to know how well they did. The positive effects of approval reap dividends for approval to generate improvement in subsequent performance (Lembo, 1979) Success breeds success.

Praise is differentiated from encouragement. Praise is viewed as external, whereas, the goal of reinforcement behavior is to motivate an internal locus of control. Encouragement is seen as the vehicle to more satisfactorily direct ownership and success to the individual. Reinforcement leads to increased interest and performance (Williams, 1979). The function of encouragement is to focus on the effort demonstrated. The ownership of accomplishment in a task well done is reinforced by statements which articulate the learner's role (i.e., "your paper indicates you studied", "you've got those facts down pat").

Whether encouragement is public or private, verbal or nonverbal, individual or group, it needs to be delivered. The delivery process may challenge one's creative genius. Listen to yourself. Is your pet support phrase worn out because of constant use? If so, chances are it carries little impact. Try a variety of phrases, tie them to the learning activity and be sincere. Your nonverbal cues may destroy the value of the verbal encouragement. Demonstrating a lively interest in what one is saying is a form of encouragement. This interest is referred to as listening, an effective, supportive interaction pattern. Listening is critical when one considers the amount of school time spent waiting to respond. Then when students do respond, someone needs to be listening!

Evidence of listening involves active not passive behaviors. In fact, participatory listening skills involve eye contact, movement toward the speaker and

the elimination of unnecessary gestures on the part of the teacher. A courtesy to the speaker is to rephrase their comment stating, "What I hear you say. . ." "Is that correct?"

Additional supportive behaviors related to listening includes asking questions that evidence the respondent's opinion is valued. Asking, "What would you do", "What do you think", or "How do you feel" provide a platform for expanded student response and an opportunity to one's views heard by others. Listening does not require agreement; however, continued dialogue should evidence that the opinion was heard (i.e., "I'm not sure I would look at it that way, but I appreciate your stand").

The classroom organizational patterns also facilitate listening skills. When teachers structure learning activities that generate constructive student-student and student-teacher interchanges, attentive listening patterns become an instructional tool. Activities which foster student participation provide practice in all communication skills. Task accountability can reflect active listening strategies through group or individual assessment. The cooperative goal structure emphasizes learning from one another which most likely demands active listening. The classroomtechnique of checking for understanding creates listening opportunities for needed reviews and summaries of class presentations. Attentive listening modeled by the teacher and practiced by the student bolsters self-respect through recognition and courtesy.

Attentive listening provides the backdrop for acceptance. A climate conducive to learning and responding is bolsteredwhen you listen to another without interrupting. Supportive too, is hearing another's opinion without contaminating their throughts with your views demonstrates a belief in that person's

worth, positively impacting the self-esteem. To enhance the instructional value of listening patterns there needs to be a reduction in the amount of telling and tutoring. A predominance of teacher talk reduces the credibility that listening nurtures. Effective listeners refine the skill of hearing "what I'm not saying". Clues from what isn't said or nonverbal interactions reflect a student's sense of belonging. Acceptance through listening behaviors aided students in feeling they had a stake in the learning process and responsibility for learning. The perception of being needed positively influenced attendance and academic achievement (Schmuck, 1963).

SUMMARY

Research verified teacher behaviors make an impressive list, but remain "ideal" words unless a vital person makes them vital. To transform these variables into student success requires specific teacher-learner interactions. Ofthese interactions, teacher performance is the most important aspect (Walencik, 1973). The effectiveness of teacher performance is measured by what students do (Medley, 1982). In most instances, this criterion of academic gain places the burden of accountability at the classroom. That burden can be made positive through the creative linkage of cognitive and affective learning opportunities.

Teacher behaviors may be unique, but patterns are identifiable and those patterns elicit definable responses from students. Maximizing those responses through structured learning activities enhances self-esteem and academic achievement.

Critical to the impact of teacher behaviors are perceptions. These perceptions influence the quality and quantity of teacher-student and student-student interaction. Perceptions determine the access a student has to

educational opportunity, an essential factor in learning. Overt efforts to counter the negative affect of perceptions as related to achievement focus on equity: the equitable distribution of supportive and motivating interactions. When teachers demonstrate specific teaching behaviors, all students benefit (Kerman, 1979).

Instructional patterns which maintain student contact with subject matter content impact on student academic gains. This teacher directed instruction, with provisions for alternative avenues to evidence mastery, is effective in basic skill instruction and important in overlearning skills.

Effective inquiry patterns engage the related behaviors, probing and latency, to increase the instructional effect of the questioning format. Questioning, indeed, is an art and teacher skills to refine the state of the art require practice. Practice also is needed in linking relevant curriculum and learning activities. Instruction that utilizes student interest and experience provides the background for further development. Managerial and instructional functions are intertwined in classroom structure behaviors. Both goal format decisions and structuring comments undergird student learning potential. Monitoring behaviors emphasize focus and learning time, effectively reducing misconduct due to fragmented instruction. Strategies to manage transitions in learning illustrate the interdependence of planning and implementation skills. Performance of clusters of teaching patterns integrated, too, with specific instructional and organizational patterns are the human relations skills. These interpersonal relations factors are seen as essential ingredients if instruction is to be meaningful and satisfactory.

Effective Teacher Behaviors

No one effective teaching style exists. There is no ready-made garment. There's no shortcut. Effective teaching requires practice to internalize supportive behaviors plus a conscientious effort to counter perceptions, interacting with all students equitably. No one said it was easy; nor did they say it was impossible.

Even though the complexity of teaching taxes the talents of the most able, teachers are consistently identified as the one factor that makes a difference in student achievement. This pat on the back is also a challenge to insure that difference counts. Effective teaching behaviors can meet that challenge and go it one better. Effective teachers know that difference counts -- for them and their students.

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